

II. Remarks

Claims 1-8, 10-23 and 25-41 of the present application are pending. Claims 7, 8, 10-15, 18-20, 22, 23, 26, 28, 31, 32 and 36-41 have been allowed. Claims 1 and 2 have been rejected, and claims 3, 5, 6, 16, 17, 25, 29, 30 and 33-35 have been objected to. Claims 9 and 24 were previously cancelled. Claims 4 and 21 are withdrawn from consideration. By this paper, claims 1, 2, and 4 have been cancelled, and claims 3, 5, 16, 25, 29, 30, and 33 have been amended. With the amendments and remarks provided herewith, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of all rejections and objections. Support for the above amendments is found in Applicants' specification as originally filed.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner has allowed claims 7, 8, 10-15, 18-20, 22, 23, 26, 28, 31, 32, and 36-41. Applicants sincerely thank the Examiner for the thorough examination and allowance of these claims.

The Examiner has objected to claims 3, 5, 6, 16, 17, 25, 29, 30, 33-35 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but has indicated that these claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Accordingly, Applicants have amended the claims such that they incorporate all of the limitations of the base claims and any intervening claims.

The Examiner did not comment on whether claim 27 was allowable, but since claim 26, from which claim 27 depends, has been allowed, Applicants believe that claim 27 is also allowable.

Furthermore, the undersigned telephoned the Examiner on 10/14/08 to determine whether the application would be allowed if claims 1 and 2 (rejected) were cancelled and claim 4 (withdrawn) was cancelled. The Examiner said that she had conducted a thorough investigation of the art and found the remaining claims to contain allowable subject matter. Thus, the Examiner agreed that a cancellation of claims 1, 2, and 4 would lead to a straight forward result and allowance.

Although claim 21 was withdrawn, it depends from claim 20, which has been allowed. Therefore, Applicants believe that claim 21 is also allowable. When the undersigned spoke with the Examiner on 10/14/08, the Examiner agreed that claim 21 was allowable because it depends from an allowed claim. The Examiner agreed to rejoin claim 21.

Thus, claims 3, 5-8, 10-23, and 25-41 are in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Responsive to the rejection of claims 1 and 2 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,222,949 to Kaldany ("Kaldany"), claims 1 and 2 have been cancelled, and therefore, this rejection has become moot.

Conclusion

Thus, claims 3, 5-8, 10-23, and 25-41 are in condition for allowance and such action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date

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